

DSHS QUALITY MONITORING STRATEGIES FOR NORTHSTAR MANAGED BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE

As required by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 (BBA) and the federal Medicaid managed care regulations (42 CFR Chapter 438), DSHS has developed a written assessment and performance improvement strategy to ensure the delivery of behavioral health services provided through the NorthSTAR managed behavioral healthcare program.

DSHS will conduct periodic reviews to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy and update the strategy periodically, as needed.

I. BHO CONTRACT PROVISIONS (42 CFR §438.204(a))

The proposed NorthSTAR Contract, to begin September 1, 2009 (the “Contract”), incorporates the standards specified in 42 CFR Chapter 438, Part D. DSHS has, and will continue, to regularly monitor and evaluate the NorthSTAR contractor, ValueOptions (referred to in this document as a behavioral health organization, or BHO), for compliance with the contract and with the standards.

For purposes of the federal regulations, ValueOptions is considered to be a prepaid inpatient health plan (PIHP).

The standards and contracts provisions incorporating those standards are as follows:

A. ACCESS STANDARDS

1. 42 CFR §438.206 - Availability of Services

All behavioral health services covered under the Medicaid State plan are available and accessible to NorthSTAR enrollees. These services are included in the mental health and chemical dependency benefits described in Appendices 8A and Appendix 8B to the Contract.

a. Delivery Network

(1) Maintaining and monitoring a network.

(a) Supported by written agreements.

Contract, §3.8: “Contractor shall maintain written subcontracts with all subcontractors, including providers and other subcontractors, and monitor performance under such subcontracts.”

Contract, §8.13.1: “Contractor shall enter into subcontracts with its providers and monitor performance of such subcontracts in compliance with §3.8 of the Contract and with 42 CFR §438.230.”

(b) Sufficient to provide adequate access to all covered services under the Contract.

Contract, §8.1.1: “Contractor shall maintain a viable provider network in the service area that meets Contractor’s DSHS-approved provider network plan and that is sufficient to provide adequate access to the full scope of covered services to Enrollees and that complies with 42 CFR Part 438, Sections 438.206 through 438.214.”

Contract, §8.1.2: “Contractor shall include the following providers in its network:

- a) Non-Facility Based Providers
 - 1. Psychiatrists.
 - 2. Psychologists.
 - 3. Licensed Professional Counselors, Licensed Master’s Social Workers-ACP.
 - 4. Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors.
 - 5. Other Qualified Credentialed Counselors (QCC).
- b) Facility-Based Providers
 - 1. Freestanding psychiatric facility.
 - 2. General acute facility that delivers behavioral health services.
 - 3. DSHS psychiatric facility.
 - 4. Psychiatric partial hospitalization/day treatment programs.
 - 5. Outpatient chemical dependency treatment programs.
 - 6. Inpatient chemical dependency treatment programs.
 - 7. Outpatient chemical dependency detoxification programs.
 - 8. Inpatient chemical dependency detoxification programs.
 - 9. Specialized female chemical dependency treatment programs.
 - 10. Residential chemical dependency detoxification program.
 - 11. Residential chemical dependency treatment programs.
 - 12. Pharmacotherapy programs.
 - 13. Dual diagnosis programs.
 - 14. Mobile Crisis.
 - 15. Specialty providers (SPN).
 - 16. Community Hospitals

Contractor shall maintain a community hospital bed capacity of 60 beds per day for inpatient services. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Contractor shall ensure the provision of all medically necessary services to enrollees.

Contract, §8.1.3: “Contractor shall have a system for monitoring patient load on its provider network so that the Contractor can effectively plan for future needs and recruit providers as necessary to assure adequate access to all covered services.”

Contract, §7.12.5: “Contractor shall ensure the continued availability of behavioral health providers, including specialty providers, programs and services, based on the assessed needs of the Enrollees.”

Contract, §8.1.10: “Contractor shall include in its provider network rural hospitals, physicians, home and community support services service agencies, and other rural health providers who:

- (a) Are sole community providers
- (b) Agree to accept Contractor’s prevailing provider contract rate, and
- (c) Meet Contractor’s credentials, provided that lack of board certification or accreditation by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) may not be the sole ground for exclusion from the provider network.”

Contract, §8.6: “Contractor shall ensure Enrollees are not required to travel in excess of 30 miles to secure covered services, with the exception of psychiatric hospitalization, 24-hour residential rehabilitation and inpatient detoxification services, for which Enrollees may not be required to travel in excess of 75 miles.”

(c) Provide for a second opinion.

Contract, §8.1.12: “Contractor shall provide for a second opinion from a qualified behavioral health professional within the network, or arrange for the Enrollee to obtain a second opinion outside the network, at no cost to the Enrollee.”

(d) Out of network services.

Contract, §8.2.1: “Contractor shall promote and ensure access to covered services within its provider network. If Contractor’s provider network is unable to provide medically necessary covered services to an Enrollee, Contractor shall adequately and timely cover these services out of network for the Enrollee for as long as the Contractor is unable to provide the services through the network. Contractor shall coordinate care with out-of-network providers and provide necessary follow-up services.”

(e) Provider credentialing.

Contract, §8.5: “Contractor shall credential all providers in accordance with 42 CFR§438.214 and with Appendix 14.”

b. Timely Access

(a) DSHS standards for timely access to care and services.

Contract, §7.12.1: “Contractor shall make medically necessary covered services available 24 hours a day, seven days a week within the following time periods:

- a) Emergency behavioral health services; immediately;
- b) Urgent Care: within 24 hours of request, including transfer between levels of care during a chemical dependency episode;
- c) Routine Care: within 14 calendar days of request;
- d) For telephone services and queries:
 - 1. telephone callers reach a non-recorded voice within 30 seconds, and
 - 2. telephone abandonment rates do not exceed 5 percent at any given time.”

Contract, §7.12.2: “Contractor shall ensure Enrollee access to covered services by providing flexible hours of operation, including evening and weekend hours, and providing services in alternative settings, such as homes and schools.”

Contract, §8.13.2 : “Contractor shall require its providers to meet DSHS standards for timely access to care and services, taking into account the urgency of the need for services.”

(b) Hours of operation.

Contract, §7.12.1: “Contractor shall make medically necessary covered services available 24 hours a day, seven days a week within the following time periods .”

- a) Emergency behavioral health services; immediately;
- b) Urgent Care: within 24 hours of request, including transfer between levels of care during a chemical dependency episode;
- c) Routine Care: within 14 calendar days of request;
- d) For telephone services and queries:
 - 1. telephone callers reach a non-recorded voice within 30 seconds, and
 - 2. telephone abandonment rates do not exceed 5 percent at any given time.”

Contract, §8.13.3: “Contractor shall ensure that the network providers offer hours of operation that are no less than the hours of operation offered to commercial enrollees or comparable to Medicaid fee-for-service, if the provider serves Medicaid enrollees.”

(c) Compliance by providers.

Contract, §8.13.4: “Contractor shall establish mechanism to ensure compliance by providers and monitor providers regularly to determine compliance and take corrective action if there is failure to comply.”

c. Cultural Considerations

Contract, §6.14.1 Contractor shall subcontract with and make referrals to providers from different cultural groups so that each Enrollee who needs culturally appropriate services may receive services from a provider who shares his cultural background, values and perspective.

Contract, §6.14.2 Contractor shall ensure equal access and participation in NorthSTAR for limited English proficient individuals through the provision of bilingual services. Contractor shall coordinate services with community advocates and agencies that assist non-English speaking individuals or that provide other culturally appropriate services.

Contract, §6.14.4: “Contractor shall make oral interpretation services for all non-English languages free of charge. Contractor shall notify enrollees and potential enrollees that

oral interpretation services are available for any language and that written information is available in alternative formats and in languages of populations groups that comprise more than 10% of the covered lives how to access those services and formats.”

Contract, §6.14.5: “Contractor shall provide 24-hour access to interpreter services for Enrollees to access emergency behavioral health services within Contractor’s network either through telephone language services or interpreters.” Contractor shall:

- a) Provide interpreter services for Enrollees as necessary to ensure effective communication, as well as translated written and video materials, documents, forms and information pamphlets, regarding behavioral health prevention services, assessment, treatment, and education;
- b) Use trained professional interpreters when behavioral health treatment is discussed. Family members or friends may not be used as interpreters in behavioral health treatment;
- c) Have an identified staff member to assist Enrollees who are deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals; and
- d) Maintain a current list of interpreters who are "on-call" to provide interpreter services and make a copy of the list readily available to the DSHS upon request. This list shall include individuals who can competently translate Spanish and provide Level III interpretive sign language services. Contractor shall comply with the Title III of the ADA and have TDDs in offices where the primary means of offering goods and services is by telephone”.

2. 42 CFR §438.207 - Assurances of Adequate Capacity and Services

a. Documentation of Appropriate Range of Services for Enrollees.

The range of available services is documented in the NorthSTAR Data Book, which also includes information to monitor network provider capacity. In addition, the BHO submits a monthly report to DSHS, the Provider Network Change Report. All providers added to or removed from the network are detailed in this report. DSHS also tracks the number and type of complaints reported to become aware of possible trends with any particular provider.

b. Documentation of Network of Providers.

Contractor shall maintain an automated standardized provider network change report summarizing changes in the Contractor’s provider network. The report shall be submitted electronically to DSHS and to the Enrollment Broker on the 15th day following the end of each quarter. The report shall identify all provider network changes for that quarter, including:

- a) Number of participating significant traditional providers;
- b) The change in providers' HUB status; and

The number of providers who have ceased participation in the provider network and the reason(s) the provider ceased such participation.

- c) The report shall also include the impact of any provider network changes on Enrollees' geographic access and cultural and linguistic services. The report

shall be in the format described in Appendix 24A, for individual providers, or Appendix 24B, for facility providers.

3. 42 CFR §438.208 - Coordination and Continuity of Care

a. Primary care and coordination of health care services

Contract, §7.12.7: “Contractor shall implement policies and procedures to ensure effective information sharing and monitoring of diagnosis, treatment, follow-up and medication usage between providers and other health care plans.”

7.13.1 Contractor shall coordinate care with physical health care plans participating in STAR according to the Memorandum of Agreement for Coordination of Medicaid Services entered into between STAR MCOs and NorthSTAR BHOs (APPENDIX 3) and in accordance with 42 CFR §438.208(b).

Contract, §5.4: “Contractor may only receive and disclose individually identifiable health information (“health information”) to carry out Contractor’s duties relating to treatment, payment or health care operations, as defined in 45 CFR §164.501, and as required under this contract. When using or disclosing health care information or when requesting health information from another entity, Contractor shall make reasonable efforts to limit the health information to the minimum necessary to accomplish the intended purpose of the use, disclosure or request.”

b. Additional services for enrollees with special health care needs

(1) Identification.

Contract, §8.8.1: “Contractor shall contract with an SPN to arrange for or provide intensive treatment and care management for adults with SMI or children with SED. “

Contract, §8.8.4: “Individuals who are eligible for services through the SPN are:

- a) Individuals who require multiple services or multiple agency involvement will be assigned to the SPN. For purposes of this subsection, "multiple services" means services in addition to medication services. Individuals discharged from DSHS psychiatric hospitals will also be referred to the SPN when the need for specialty services is indicated; and
- b) Through the intake and assessment process, Contractor will identify Enrollees eligible for covered services through the SPN and will authorize the Enrollee to receive these services through the SPN. Contractor shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that the Enrollee follows through on the referral and is engaged in treatment. Contractor is also responsible for authorizations, UM, UR and quality oversight of services provided by the SPN.”

(2) Assessment.

Contract, §8.8.3: “In collaboration with Contractor, the SPN will:

- a) Assess using DSHS approved assessment instrument, develop a treatment plan and ensure service coordination for each Enrollee for whom the SPN is responsible;
- b) Assess persons referred by the courts for involuntary mental health commitments and provide service coordination to ensure appropriate coordination of treatment;
- c) Provide specialized mental health services for adults with SMI;
- d) Provide specialty mental health services to children with SED;
- e) Provide outreach to persons with mental illness in local jails and juvenile facilities; and
- f) Provide information and data as required to Contractor to track services, treatment outcomes and costs.”

4. 42 CFR §438.210 - Coverage and Authorization of Services

a. Coverage.

Contract, §7.1.1: “Appendix 8A describes the scope of mental health benefits. Appendix 8B describes the scope of chemical dependency benefits. Appendix 22 lists the services and service codes covered by the NorthSTAR program. Contractor shall provide medically necessary services to enrollees in the amount, duration and scope that can reasonably be expected to achieve the purpose for which the services are provided. Contractor may not arbitrarily deny or reduce the amount, duration or scope of a required services because of a diagnosis, type of illness, or condition of the enrollee.”

Contract, §7.1.3: “Mental health benefits for enrolled youth is not limited. Utilization shall be based on meeting medical necessity criteria.”

Contract, §7.2: “The following behavioral health services are excluded from the NorthSTAR benefits for Medicaid individuals, but are covered for Medicaid individuals enrolled in the STAR program:

- a) Screening for behavioral health disorders during well adult checks;
- b) THSteps exams and other ambulatory health exams;
- c) Emergency medical transportation for behavioral health emergencies;
- d) Behavioral health services provided by primary care physicians, other STAR physicians or other applicable Medicaid physicians within the scope of their licenses;
- e) Behavioral health services provided by federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics;
- f) Ambulatory laboratory services for Medicaid eligible individuals, and
- g) Certain emergency room and inpatient hospital services, as described in Appendix 3.

Medication benefits are also excluded from the NorthSTAR benefits for Medicaid enrollees, but are covered in the Medicaid Vendor Drug Program.”

Contract, Appendix 1 (Definitions): “Medically Necessary Service – A behavioral health service that:

- A. is reasonably necessary for the diagnosis or treatment of a mental health or chemical dependency disorder to improve or maintain an individual’s level of functioning resulting from such a disorder;
- B. is in accordance with professionally accepted clinical guidelines and standards of practice in behavioral health care;
- C. is furnished in the most appropriate and least restrictive setting in which services can be safely provided;
- D. is the most appropriate level or supply of service which can safely be provided; and
- E. Could not be omitted without adversely affecting the individual’s mental and/or physical health or the quality of care rendered.”

b. Authorization.

Contract, §7.19.2: “Any decision to deny a service authorization request or to authorize a service in an amount, duration or scope that is less than requested shall be reviewed by board certified or board eligible psychiatrists of the same or similar specialty as the services being denied. If the service denials are for children’s services, the denial review shall be made by a psychiatrist with appropriate clinical expertise. If chemical dependency services are denied, the denial shall be made by a physician or psychiatrist who is a certified addictionologist or has American Society for Addictive Medicine (ASAM) certification or a psychiatrist who can demonstrate the equivalence to such certification through training and experience. Contractor shall consult with the requesting provider when appropriate.”

Contract, §7.19.3: “Contractor must maintain a comprehensive UM manual, which complies with DSHS-approved UM criteria. Contractor must ensure that all UM reviewers apply the UM criteria consistently and in compliance with applicable TDI statutes. Any changes must be approved by DSHS.”

Contract, §7.19.4: “Contractor may not require prior notification or authorization for emergency behavioral health services before such services are delivered.”

d. Notice of adverse action.

Contract, §6.12.3: “Contractor shall comply with the Enrollee complaint system procedures approved by DSHS. The Enrollee complaint system procedures shall include the following:

- a) Written policies and procedures for taking, tracking, reviewing, resolving and reporting all Enrollee complaints. The total time for acknowledgment, investigation, resolution and notice to the enrollee of the disposition of the complaint or appeal shall not exceed 30 calendar days from receipt of the complaint;

- b) Written policies and procedures for taking, tracking, reviewing, resolving and reporting all Enrollee appeals of adverse determinations, in accordance with Texas Insurance Code §843.261 and Article 21.58A, and actions, in accordance with 42 CFR §438.408;
- c) Written notice to the enrollee and notice to the requesting provider within the timeframes specified in 42 CFR §438.404(c), meeting the linguistic requirements of Section 6.14.3 of this Contract, of any action or adverse action and containing the following information: an explanation of the action the contractor has taken or intends to take; the reasons for the action, the enrollee's or provider's right to file an appeal of the action; the enrollee's right to request an appeal and, for life-threatening conditions: prior to exhausting the Contractor's complaint procedures, the right of the Medicaid enrollee to request a DSHS fair hearing and the right of the non-Medicaid enrollee to request a review by an Independent Review Organization; the procedures for exercising the enrollee's rights, and circumstances under which expedited resolution of appeals is available and how to request it; the enrollee's right to have benefits continued pending resolution of the appeal, and the circumstances under which the enrollee may be required to pay the costs of these services;.
- d) Written notice to the Enrollee within five business days of receipt of complaints not concerning emergencies or denials of continued stays for hospitalization. The notice shall contain the name of the staff person who may be contacted regarding the complaint, and the toll-free telephone or local telephone numbers of the Enrollee Services Representative and the LBHA's Consumer Ombudsman, and a description of the complaint and appeal procedures;
- e) Participation by individuals with specific responsibility for the complaint process and with authority to require corrective action who were not involved in any previous level of review or decision-making;
- f) Designation of an officer of the Contractor to have primary responsibility for the monitoring and oversight of complaint procedures and for the regular reporting to the Quality Improvement Committee;
- g) Individuals who make decision on grievances and appeals shall be health care professionals who have the appropriate clinical expertise, as determined by the DSHS, in treating the enrollee's condition or disease if the decision is on any of the following: 1) an appeal of a denial based on lack of medical necessity; 2) a grievance regarding denial of expedited resolution of an appeal; 3) a grievance or appeal that involves clinical issues;
- h) Appeals procedures shall provide that oral inquiries seeking to appeal an action are treated as appeals and shall be confirmed in writing, unless the enrollee or the provider requests expedited resolution; provide the enrollee a reasonable opportunity to present evidence and allegation of fact or law, in person as well as in writing; provide the enrollee and his or her representative opportunity, before and during the appeals process, to examine the enrollee's case file, including medical records, and any other documents and records considered during the appeals process; include as parties to the appeal the

- enrollee and his or her representative or the legal representative of a deceased enrollee's estate;
- i) Routine detection of complaint and appeal patterns and involvement of management and supervisory staff in developing policies and procedures to improve the complaint process;
 - j) Education of Enrollees, family members, when appropriate, and providers regarding the Enrollee complaint procedures, assistance by an Enrollee Services Representative or other appropriate staff, including interpreters, to Enrollees in filing complaints;
 - k) Maintenance of a record of every complaint received in person, by telephone or in writing, which record includes the date of contact, the date complaint was filed, identification of the individual filing the complaint, identification of the Enrollee on whose behalf the complaint was filed, including the Enrollee's name, address and telephone number, identification of the individual recording the complaint, the disposition of the complaint, corrective action required, and date resolved;
 - l) Written logs of tabulated complaints and appeals shall be reviewed by the Contractor's Quality Improvement Committee and Contractor's officer charged with complaint system oversight. Contractor shall document the review procedures taken by the Quality Improvement Committee and officer;
 - m) Standard resolution of appeals of actions and adverse actions and notification of such resolution shall be completed not later than the 30th calendar day after receipt of written request for appeal. Expedited appeals concerning emergencies, denials of continued stays for hospitalization and emergencies, in accordance with Texas Insurance Code §843.258 and Article 21.58A and expedited resolution of appeals, in accordance with 42 CFR §§ 438.408 and 438.410;
 - n) Contractor's management or supervisory staff responsible for the services or operations that are the subject of a complaint shall promptly review Enrollee complaints; and
 - o) Continuation of benefits while the IRO review is pending, or while the appeal or fair hearing is pending, pursuant to 42 CFR §438.420."

e. Timeframe for decision.

Contract, §6.12.3: "Contractor shall comply with the Enrollee complaint system procedures approved by DSHS. The Enrollee complaint system procedures shall include the following:

...

- (m) Standard resolution of appeals of actions and adverse actions and notification of such resolution shall be completed not later than the 30th calendar day after receipt of written request for appeal. Expedited appeals concerning emergencies, denials of continued stays for hospitalization and denials of care for life-threatening conditions, in accordance with Texas Insurance Code, Articles 20A.12 and 21.58A and expedited resolution of appeals, in accordance with 42 CFR §§ 438.408 and 438.410."

Contract, §7.19.5 Contractor shall comply with the verification and preauthorization requirements contained in Insurance Code §§843.347 and 843.348, respectively. Notwithstanding the timeframes for determining preauthorization requests in Insurance Code §843.348(b), however, for all routine care requests, Contractor shall complete the authorization process and communicate a decision to the provider within three (3) calendar days of the provider's request. For urgent service requests, Contractor shall communicate its decision to the provider within five hours of the provider's request.

f. Compensation for utilization management activities.

Contract, §7.19.9: "Contractor shall ensure that compensation to individuals or entities that conduct utilization management activities is not structured so as to provide incentives for the individual or entity to deny, limit, or discontinue medically necessary services to any Enrollee."

§12.12 Ownership of Data

DSHS shall be and remain the sole and exclusive owner of any and all data ("DSHS's Data") pertaining to the operation of NorthSTAR. DSHS's Data includes all data entered into Contractor's MIS System, including without limitation, all Covered Lives and Enrollee information, eligibility data, claims reports, utilization reports, and any information from DSHS's present data processing and information system which shall be transferred and converted to operate on Contractor's MIS System. Neither Contractor nor any of its employees, agents, consultants, or assigns shall have any rights in any of DSHS's Data in any form including, but not limited to, raw data, stripped data, cumulated data, usage information, and statistical information derived from or in connection with the DSHS's Data. The parties agree that Contractor shall promptly download for and provide to DSHS, at no cost to DSHS, all such DSHS's Data in an electronically accessible form upon the termination of this Contract. Nothing in this section precludes Contractor from maintaining a copy of the data elements listed in this section. This provision shall survive the term or termination of this Contract.

B. STRUCTURE AND OPERATION STANDARDS

1. 42 CFR §438.14 - Provider Selection

a. Credentialing and recredentialing.

Contract, §8.5: "Contractor shall credential all providers in accordance with 42 CFR §438.214 and with Appendix 14."

b. Nondiscrimination.

Contract, §8.1.5: Contractor shall not discriminate against providers acting within the scope of their license or state certification with respect to participation, reimbursement, or indemnification, solely on the basis of such licensure or certification. If Contractor decides not to include individual or groups of providers in the provider network, Contractor shall give the affected providers written notice of the reason for such decision.

c. Excluded providers.

Contract, §8.1.9: “Contractor may not contract with providers who have been excluded from participating in the Medicaid or Medicare programs.”

Contract, §8.1.11: “Contractor may not contract with any contractor who is not in good standing with DSHS.”

2. 42 CFR §438.218 - Enrollee Information

DSHS complies with the information requirements under §438.10, which constitute part of DSHS’s quality strategy at §438.204.

3. 42 CFR §438.224 - Safeguarding Information

Contract, §5.4.1: “Contractor may only receive and disclose individually identifiable health information (“health information”) to carry out Contractor’s duties relating to treatment, payment or health care operations, as defined in 45 CFR §164.501, and as required under this contract. When using or disclosing health care information or when requesting health information from another entity, Contractor shall make reasonable efforts to limit the health information to the minimum necessary to accomplish the intended purpose of the use, disclosure or request.”

Contract, §5.4.2: “Contractor shall inform Enrollees, subcontractors, and providers of the provisions of 42 CFR Part 431, Subpart F, regarding Safeguarding Information on Applicants and Recipients, and Contractor shall ensure that confidential information is protected from disclosure except for authorized purposes.”

4. 42 CFR §438.226 - Enrollment and Disenrollment

6.5.1 Contractor shall ensure that Enrollee requests for disenrollment are not processed through Contractor’s complaint procedures but are submitted to DSHS for processing within five business days after the Contractor receives the disenrollment request.

Contract, §6.6.1: “Contractor may request disenrollment of an Enrollee against his or her will under limited conditions. These conditions include, but are not limited to:

- a) Severe disruptive behavior not caused by a behavioral health condition at a network provider's office;
- b) Fraudulent loaning of the Enrollee's Medicaid identification card to another person, or
- c) the Enrollee no longer meets the eligibility criteria set forth in §6.1.”

Contract, §6.6.2: “Contractor may not request a disenrollment based on any of the following:

- a) An adverse change in the Enrollee’s health or behavioral health status;
- b) The Enrollee’s utilization of services;

- c) Enrollee's race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, political beliefs or religion;
- d) Enrollee's diminished mental capacity, or
- e) Enrollee's uncooperative or disruptive behavior due to his or her behavioral health condition."

Contract, §6.6.3: "Prior to exercising a right to disenroll an Enrollee under this section, Contractor shall:

- a) Document that necessary steps have been taken to educate the Enrollee regarding the conditions for disenrollment listed in §6.6.1 above, and
- b) If an Enrollee exhibits disruptive behavior, Contractor shall work with the Enrollee and his family, as appropriate, to develop a plan to address the disruptive behavior prior to requesting disenrollment of the Enrollee."

Contract, §6.6.4: "DSHS shall approve all involuntary disenrollments. No involuntary disenrollment will be effective until DSHS has approved the request for disenrollment."

Contract, §6.6.6: "Contractor shall provide DSHS with a written request to disenroll an Enrollee against his or her will."

5. 42 CFR §438.228 -Grievance Systems

6. 42 CFR §438.230 - Subcontractual Relationships and Delegation

C. MEASUREMENT AND IMPROVEMENT STANDARDS

1. Practice Guidelines

Contract, §7.19.6: "Contractor shall adopt practice guidelines that meet the following requirements:

- a) are based on valid and reliable clinical evidence or a consensus of health care professionals in the behavioral healthcare field;
- b) consider the needs of the enrollees;
- c) are adopted in consultation with contracting health care professionals;
- d) are reviewed and updated periodically as appropriate."

7.19.7 Contractor shall disseminate the practice guidelines to all affected providers and upon request, to enrollees and potential enrollees.

2. Quality Assessment and Performance Improvement Program

Contract, §3.10.2: "Contractor shall conduct performance improvement projects designed to achieve, through ongoing measurements and intervention, significant improved, sustained over time, in clinical and nonclinical care areas. Contractor shall have mechanisms to detect both underutilization and overutilization of services and to

assess the quality and appropriateness of care furnished to enrollees with special health care needs.”

3.10.4 Contractor shall report the status and results of each project to DSHS as requested. Each performance improvement project shall be completed in a reasonable time period so as to generally allow information on the success of performance improvement projects in the aggregate to produce new information on quality of care every year.

3.10.5 Contractor's QAPI program shall apply to covered services received by all Enrollees regardless of their eligibility type.

3.10.6 Contractor shall submit a description of its QAPI for approval to DSHS by August 31, 2006.

3.10.7 Contractor shall comply with the medical records standards contained in Appendix 2 or the treatment records standards contained in the current National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) Standards for Managed Behavioral Health Care Organizations, or Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Operations (JCAHO), or the Utilization Review Accreditation Committee (URAC)

3. Health Information Systems

II. DSHS PROCEDURES (42 CFR §438.204(b))

Information on race, ethnicity, and primary language is obtained in the enrollment process. Maximus, the enrollment broker, is contracted with the STAR health plan. This contract is overseen by DSHS Medicaid Agency, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission

DSHS conducts the following quality monitoring activities:

A. CONSUMER ADVOCACY AND INVOLVEMENT

Through local Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) meetings and the Local Behavioral Health Authority, consumers will have meaningful input into the policy directions, resolution of complaints, and quality and scope of care provided. The BHO will also include consumers on their internal quality improvement committees.

B. CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING

Using methods including onsite reviews and monitoring of deliverables, DSHS will monitor the Contractors conformance with contract requirements. In addition, performance incentives and liquidated damages specified in the contract will assist DSHS in encouraging compliance.

C. COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF DATA

Using advance data collection and analysis techniques, DSHS will monitor major aspects of the BHO's activities including types of care, frequency of services, claims payment information, financial information, and clinical quality indications including outcome measurement.

D. FOCUSED STUDIES

DSHS, the EQRO, and the BHO will collaborate on DSHS approved focused studies. These studies will meet the requirements of the QAPI standards.

E. CONSUMER AND LOCAL REVIEW OF REPORTS DATA AND COMPLAINTS

The LBHA and RAC will review the results of monitoring activities and participate in interpretation and development of corrective action plans, and new policies relating to the program.

III. NATIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES (42 CFR §438.204(c))

DSHS uses the few HEDIS measures that are relevant to behavioral health.

IV. ANNUAL, EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT REVIEWS (42 CFR §438.204(d))

In compliance with CMS requirements, DSHS contracts with a External Quality Review Organization (EQRO) to review, on an annual basis, the quality of services delivered by the BHO. The EQRO is a private accreditation organization approved by CMS. The EQRO is not a part of DSHS government, and is not a managed care organization or an association of managed care organizations. The current EQRO is Institute for Child Health Policy (ICHP).

On Site Review by External Quality Review Organization (EQRO)

The EQRO will perform yearly onsite surveys of the BHO in order to determine compliance with the contract provisions.

Customer satisfaction survey

Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) or the EQRO will perform a customer satisfaction survey in collaboration with the BHO and the DSHS.

Provider satisfaction survey

Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) or the EQRO will perform a provider satisfaction survey in collaboration with the BHO and DSHS.

V. INFORMATION SYSTEM (42 CFR §438.204(f))

Our data system provides us with detailed information on enrollment, encounter, drug, and assessment data. Thus, DSHS has the capacity to monitor any or all of these data categories for quality and performance information. Since we own the data, we have flexibility to use our analyses to monitor any indicators and make adjustments, if necessary, for quality improvement.